

GENERAL NOTES

Chimney Swifts Use Same Nest for Five Consecutive Years.—In a nesting colony of the Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*) on the campus of Kent State University, Kent, Ohio, air shaft S1 on the Administration Building has been used by various pairs and 3-somes (and one 5-some) for many years (Dexter, *Ohio J. Sci.*, **69**: 193–213, 1969). Between 1947 and 1969, nests in that shaft were placed either on the wall or on a slight ridge projecting from the wall. In 1970, while alterations were made in the building, workmen cut a hole approximately eight inches in diameter through the wall 13 feet down from the top of the shaft. That summer a pair of Chimney Swifts built its nest in the hole resting it on the bottom of the hole. This nest and the one made the following year disintegrated over the winter and had to be replaced. Beginning in 1972, however, the old nest remained, and after some repair each year, was reused for a total of five years. Details are given below.

In my experience over a period of 34 years, only once before did Chimney Swifts attempt to reuse an old nest. That one was placed on the side of a wall and fell soon after the eggs were laid the second season (Dexter, *Wilson Bull.*, **74**: 284–285, 1962).

In 1970, female swift no. 31-197243 was mated to male no. 28-141886 in shaft S1. They remained mated over the next two seasons and built a new nest in the hole in 1971 and 1972. The nest made in 1972, however, did not disintegrate and after reinforcement was reused by the same female in 1973 that was then mated with a new male, no. 71-18490. Late in the nesting season, they were joined by a visitor, forming a 3-some.

For the next three years, the same female nested in the same nest with a different male each time. In 1974, her mate was no. 71-32522 and during the nesting season they were joined by sometimes three and sometimes four visitors (Dexter, *Bird-Banding*, **45**: 365, 1974). In 1975, her mate was no. 73-26444 and they were joined by a single visitor, forming a 3-some. In 1976, her mate was no. 73-26490, but no seasonal visitor joined them that season. (Visitors are usually immature swifts that become attached to a nesting pair. See *Wilson Bull.*, **64**: 133–139, 1952.)

In 1977, female (31-197243) returned without her former mate, and nested in shaft Q2 with the male (31-197254) that had nested there since 1972, but whose mate over the past two years did not return. Beginning on 25 May, a swift was seen occasionally sitting on the old nest in S1. Two days later, saliva was added to strengthen it. On 3 June, two swifts were observed on the nest, and more saliva was added. One of these birds had been banded from shaft S1 in the fall of 1974, and had been a temporary visitor with several nesting pairs in the seasons of 1975 and 1976, including the S1 pair during the latter year. In 1977, it occupied shaft S1 with a newly banded swift (870-14368), but in spite of patching up the old nest, they soon abandoned it and disappeared. The nest is still present after five years of continuous use.—RALPH W. DEXTER, *Department of Biological Sciences, Kent State University, Kent, OH 44242*. Received 22 September 1977, accepted 11 October 1977.

Forty Adult Chimney Swifts at an Active Nest.—A flock of 40 Chimney Swifts (*Chaetura pelagica*) roosted in a chimney containing an active Chimney Swift nest in early July 1977, in western Illinois.

Several records documenting groups of adults at an active nest have appeared in recent years (Dexter, 1952, 1969, 1974). Dexter's record in 1974 documents six adult swifts at one nest, the largest number of swifts observed at an active nest during Dr. Dexter's 35 years of research on the species. Our flock of 40 was in a chimney of an abandoned brick building in a rural area. The chimney was 12–15 m high and 1 m wide at the nest level. The flock was watched leaving the chimney on one morning and entering it on three evenings between 8 and 14 July, with flock size ranging from 17 to 40 individuals during that time. The flock entered the chimney each night in the manner typical of the species (Pickens, 1935; Groskin, 1945), roosting as close as 2 m from the active nest. The entering swifts stimulated constant begging by at least three young at the nest. The young were in the nest on 8 July, and were clinging to the chimney wall by 14 July. Food was brought to the nest about every half hour, similar to the feeding rate at other swift nests in our area. This suggests that few if any of these 40 roosting swifts were nest helpers.

In nearby areas, some chimneys without active nests attracted roosting flocks of up to 300 Chimney Swifts during the 1977 breeding season. In New York, James (1950) reported large flocks of swifts still roosting in the spring after breeding swifts had paired off, but we found no other records of large mid-summer swift roosts.

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- R. M. ZAMMUTO AND E. C. FRANKS, *Department of Biological Sciences, Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL 61455*. Received 15 December 1977, accepted 27 March 1978.

Privet as a Potential Winter Food Supplement for Songbirds.—Privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*) hedges are common throughout the eastern United States, especially along southeastern stream and river bottoms. This plant is a prolific fruit-producer; however, food habit investigations have generally provided little evidence that the fruits of this plant are of value to wildlife.

Privet comprises a large percentage of the winter diet of some fur-bearing animals. Johnson (*Agric. Exp. Sta. Bull.* 402, 148 p., 1970) reported that privet makes up as much as 60% of the total diet of Raccoons (*Procyon lotor*) in Alabama during November and December. Bird utilization of this plant has not been mentioned in many studies. Martin et al. ("American Wildlife and Plants," 500 p., 1951) reported that privet comprised ½ to 2% of the diet in Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*), Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*) in Maryland, and the Tree Sparrows (*Spizella arborea*) in Maryland; 5 to 10% of the diet of Cedar Waxwings (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) in the southeast and northeast was privet. No other study could be found showing any appreciable utilization of privet by songbirds.

Two small hedges of privet (approximately 0.25 ha) were isolated for observation during late January and early February (1977) for songbird utilization. One hedge was located on the Oconee River in Greene County, the other was located along a tributary of the Oconee River in Clarke County, Georgia. Temperatures during this period were on the average sub-freezing.

A total of 124 individuals of seven species were observed feeding on the fruits of privet during two hours of observation over a three-week period (Table 1). There was a total of 2,362 bird-minutes of use during this period of observation. American Robins were the largest birds eating the fruit. Large numbers of robins could be heard feeding among other hedge rows on adjacent areas. Cedar Waxwings and White-throated Sparrows were also seen feeding on large quantities of fruit. Two Gray Catbirds seen feeding on the privet comprised an unusual record for this area during the winter according to Burleigh ("Georgia Birds," 1958).

A total of 131 bird fecal samples were collected from under one privet shrub and all were found to contain remains of partly digested privet fruits. In addition to fecal analyses, eight road-killed robins were collected from three counties and their digestive tracts examined. The results are shown in Table 2; seven of the eight specimens contained between 85 and 100% privet by volume. One specimen contained 68 privet seeds in the digestive tract.